

REMARKS

The 30 January 2003 official action addressed claims 1-10. Claims 1-10 are amended and remain pending.

Drawings

Approval of the drawings filed on 21 September 2001 is requested.

Priority document

Acknowledgement of receipt of the certified copy of the priority document filed with the application is requested.

1. Overview of amendmentsClaim amendments

Claim 1 is amended to clarify that first and second holding members engage an LCD panel therebetween using depressions formed in the holding members, and to clarify that a portion of one holding member that engages the other holding member is formed of an elastically deformable material in one of or both of the holding members.

Further amendments are made to claim 1 to clarify its language. Dependent claims 2-10 are also amended for clarity.

No new matter is added.

2. Response to objections and rejectionsPrior art rejections

Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Nakamura (U.S. 6,342,933). Claims 2, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Nakamura in view of Terao (U.S. 6,342,932). It is believed that the claims will be seen to be distinguished from the cited references in view of the following discussion.

The claimed invention pertains to a structure for holding an LCD panel. An example is shown in Figure 2 of the application. As shown in Figure 2, an LCD panel 13 is held between holding members 11 and 12. The LCD panel is engaged at its peripheral edge by a depression formed in each holding member. In alternative embodiments such as those shown in Figures 4 and 5, a depression may be provided in only one of the holding members. Returning to Figure 2, the portions of the holding members that engage each other 11b, 12b are formed of an elastically deformable material. In alternative embodiments, the engaging portions of only one of the holding members may be elastically deformable. By providing an elastically deformable material at this location, the LCD panel may be firmly held between in the depressions provided in the holding members by simply clipping the holding members together. As such, the holding members can be attached without screws, which provides a great deal of design freedom that allows the structure to be easily integrated into a wide range of display devices.

The cited references pertain to holding structures used in liquid crystal displays, but are different than the structure of the claimed invention. Nakamura discloses a structure (Figure 1) in which a circuit substrate 12 is held between a metal box and an elastic portion 17a of "mold box." Unlike the claimed invention, Nakamura engages a circuit substrate, whereas the claimed invention engages the actual LCD panel itself (i.e. a pair of glass substrates between which a liquid crystal is provided, see e.g. application page 6, lines 6-17). Further, if Nakamura's structures 11 and 17 are considered holding members, those holding members do not engage each other, and so there is no portion of either holding member that engages the other and is made of an elastically deformable material. Therefore Nakamura is distinguished from the structure described in claim 1. Dependent claims 2-10 are distinguished for these reasons as well as for the additional novel features recited therein.

Terao discloses a structure (Figures 1 and 2) in which an LCD panel 11 is held between a holding member 10 and a glass panel (not numbered). The glass panel is held in place by a cover 36 that does not make contact with the holding member. A cushion 35 is provided between the cover 36 and the holding

member 10. In contrast to the structure specified by claim 1, Terao's structure does not hold an LCD panel between two holding members, but rather between one holding member and a glass panel. Further, Terao's structure does not include two holding members, but rather a single holding member 10. Further still, Terao's structure does not include a holding member that has an elastically deformable part for engaging another holding member, since Terao has only one holding member.

With regard to claim 3, Terao fails to teach two holding members that both have depressions for engaging the peripheral edge of an LCD panel. With regard to claim 6, Terao fails to teach a structure in which the portion of a holding member that has a depression is formed of an elastically deformable material. With regard to claim 7, Terao fails to teach a structure in which a holding member is formed entirely of an elastically deformable material. With regard to claim 8, Terao fails to teach a structure in which the portions of both holding members that have depressions are formed of an elastically deformable material. With regard to claim 9, Terao fails to teach a structure in which both holding members are formed entirely of an elastically deformable material. The remaining claims are also distinguished from Terao for the reasons recited in claim 1 as well as for the additional novel features recited therein.

Accordingly it is believed that the structures taught in the Nakamura and Terao references do not teach the claimed structure either individually or in combination. All claims are therefore believed to be patentably distinguished from the cited references.

The foregoing amendments and remarks address all bases for objection and rejection and are believed to place the case in condition for allowance. The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 29, 2003

By



FOLEY & LARDNER
Washington Harbour
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20007-5109
Telephone: (202) 672-5407
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Ronald Coslick
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 36,489